

# The MOST HATED MAN in FRANCE

## Going with the GUILLOTINE.



### Culled From History Of the Guillotine

**M**OST people believe the guillotine to have been invented by Dr. Guillotine.

He is said to have obtained his information of its use from reading an anonymous description of an execution at Milan.

Sometimes stated that Dr. Guillotine himself perished by the bloody machine which bears his name.

During the French Revolution it was first given the name *Louisette*; first called *la guillotine*, April 28, 1792.

**T**HE most hated man in all France is about to lose his job. He is Anatole Deblat, public executioner by hereditary right, the third in his line. The French chamber of deputies has before it to decide once for all the portentous question whether capital punishment in France is to be abolished and the executioner to go. There seems to be little doubt that the Radical majority will answer this question in the affirmative, and that, before long, the terrible guillotine—"The Widow," as it is called with grim humor—will be taken from its present quarters in the Rue de la Folie-Mregault to a permanent home in the Carnavalet Museum, to be gazed at as a relic of bygone times. The budget committee already has

gone so far toward shelving M. Deblat and anticipating the vote of parliament as to recommend the suppression of his salary and allowance as public executioner.

#### Sentiment Against Guillotine.

The situation arising from this recommendation is a curious one. For some time no execution has been witnessed in Paris because since La Roquette prison was pulled down, about four years ago, the guillotine has had no abiding place in the capital. Every time it is proposed to chop off some criminal's head on this or that quarter of the square, such a storm of protest is immediately raised by the inhabitants interested, that the project is forthwith stopped. More than

one convict is lying in a Paris prison under sentence of death, and the president of the republic finds himself practically compelled to commute the capital penalty to one of lifelong imprisonment. One jovial assassin, called "Le Frise des Hautes," ("Curly Wig of the Market") vows that he will not be hanged.

"They have condemned me to die," he says, "and they shall execute me." But "The Widow" has been doing her bloody work by a province, and has been cutting down of late, in view of the rarity of executions, it has been computed that each time she operates she costs the state 10,000 francs, or \$2,000.

After the criminals themselves, the

question of abolishing the guillotine, of course, most nearly affects Anatole Deblat, or "M. de Paris," as the jest-loving Gauls have named him.

M. Deblat is so unpopular through his calling that he is in danger of being mobbed wherever he goes; and, in fact, he is often followed by crowds of hoodlums and hoisted at. He is obliged to conceal his identity, and neither good nor bad society will tolerate his presence. Yet it is hardly necessary to point out that, as yet, his occupation is strictly a lawful one.

The prejudice against M. Deblat arises from a natural aversion to a man whose business is the taking of human life, even when the life is that of a murderer, but it is noticeable

that there is a more intense prejudice against M. Deblat than against any American or English executioner. This is partly due to the fact that the public headman of France is credited by the foolishly superstitious with having the "evil eye," which brings death or disaster to whomsoever it lights upon. This probably accounts for the scores of threatening letters that monthly come to M. Deblat's house.

M. Deblat's grandfather was the founder of the line, so to speak. His dexterity was such that he once guillotined eight sailors at Brest at a single stroke of the knife. Louis, who succeeded him, died two years ago at the ripe age of eighty-one, after hav-

ing terminated the existences of forty-seven criminals of both sexes.

#### Salary and Emoluments.

The salary and emoluments of the public executioner are anything but contemptible. M. de Paris has a fixed annual income of 6,000 francs (\$1,200), to which much is added a further sum of 8,000 francs (\$1,600) for the upkeep of the guillotine. He has four assistants, two of whom get 4,000 francs (\$800), the other two 3,000 francs (\$600) per annum. Then an allowance of 10 francs (\$2) is made to each executioner for every day that the guillotine is in operation. An important perquisite is the sale of new and second-hand guillotines to the colonies and to foreign countries, and of "guillotine" cigar cutters, which are much sought after in certain circles. The net annual income of the Deblats may, therefore, be calculated at 20,000 francs (\$4,000).

M. Deblat lives in a nice little villa in the Rue de Blancourt, near the "fortifications." It is a kind of Swiss chalet in the midst of a garden with a fine acacia overshadowing

the gate. You would say, "There lives a philosopher," and you would add, on seeing the spyhole, "a mistrustful one." As soon as the bell handle at the garden gate is pulled, the blinds are let down as by magic—probably by an automatic arrangement. On a closer inspection you perceive that the gate is protected, doubtless as a precaution against a sudden attack on the part of those terrible Parisian hoodlums, the Apaches, for M. Deblat, in the nature of things, must have more enemies than friends.

Here, then, lives M. Deblat in the bosom of his family when he is not called away by his official duties. This villa, by the bye, has a history. It was purchased by Louis Deblat after he had guillotined Ravachol, when the terror of anarchists' ven-

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### Mrs. Theodore Shonts, Wife of the Chairman of the Isthmian Canal Commission.

**E**ACH season brings to Washington new faces, new hostesses, and new homes, and the feminine mind is quick to realize that new gowns must be counted along with each addition to the social circle. While the average masculine mind has not yet learned to grasp the intricacies of a woman's wardrobe, the uppermost question ever with the fair sex is what novelties the women of society will offer in the way of smart toilettes. In Washington gowns must be exceedingly handsome to be conspicuous in the array of costumes which lend color to the various social functions, and it is interesting to note

the fact that Washington this season will offer the smartest gowns it has known for many years. The return of Mrs. Shonts, wife of the chairman of the Isthmian Canal Commission, and her two very attractive daughters has given three interesting additions to the smart circle at the Capital, and the long residence abroad last summer of the Shonts family, together with the innumerable trunks that were rolled from the steamer to their hotel, gives society much to think of in the matter of toilettes, and their hundred and one dainty accessories.

#### Best Gowned in Washington.

In the recent reviews of social happenings the Shonts girls have occu-

pied more space than any other young women this season. While columns have been written about them, the society writers have failed to note the fact that Mrs. Shonts promises to take to herself the distinction of being the best-gowned woman in Washington.

Mrs. Shonts is a striking-looking woman, one with perfect poise and experience in many of the most important social centers of the world. Her gowns were the envy of most of the women in London and Paris, where, particularly in the latter city, the women are noted for their excellent taste in this regard. With her daughters, Mrs. Shonts attracted especial notice at the spring drawing-

### And the Gown She Wore When Presented at Court in London

room at which she and her daughters were presented to King Edward. Subsequently in Paris and in other continental cities the gowns, hats, boots, and even gloves, of the stunning American woman and her daughters were paraded in the newspapers. Mrs. Shonts has brought from Europe any number of beautiful gowns designed for this season's wear. So far she has worn a half dozen of these, and each has proved more dazzling than the other.

Among the many beautifully gowned women at the state functions at the White House and elsewhere, Mrs. Shonts is always conspicuous for her taste. Her costumes bear the stamp of originality and individuality, com-

bined always with fashions and colors that suit her complexion and figure.

#### White House Dinner Dress.

At the White House dinner to the members of the Cabinet, December 13, Mrs. Shonts wore an effective creation of lace net over pale green chiffon and tulle, hand embroidered, the bodice trimmed with rows of white, pink and blue tubing. Directly in front, the corsage was ornamented with a cluster of roses and clematis in cloth of gold, and the tiny puff sleeves and the top of the decollete bodice were finished with milk tulle.

When her two attractive daughters, Miss Marguerite Shonts and Miss

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